

MACOMBER

SEMI-CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION
of
The Michigan College
of
Agriculture & Mechanic Arts

THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN
ONCE OWNED ONE-HALF OF TOLEDO

both by

Albert Everett Macomber

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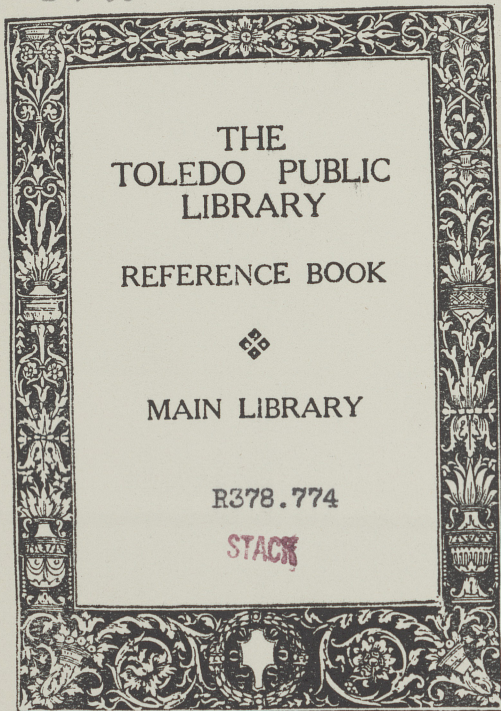


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Semi-centennial celebration
of the Michigan #53398116

Albert Everett Macomber

Semi-Centennial Celebration

Of the Michigan College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts.

HON. JOSEPH R. WILLIAMS, THE FIRST PRESIDENT AND CHIEF PROMOTER

The Morrill Land Grant Bill; Michigan Leads the Way; Great Subsequent Development.

(From Toledo Evening Press, August 2, 1907.)

Editor Evening Press:

Of all the collegiate anniversaries of the closing scholastic year of 1906-7, the most notable by far was the Michigan College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts. This flourishing institution is situated three miles east of Lansing, the capital of the state, upon a beautiful campus, bordered upon the east and south by a highly cultivated farm of 676 acres through which flows the clear waters of the Red Cedar river.

Upon this campus (now covered by fifty-two buildings), the first class of seventy-three students assembled in May, 1857. It was the pioneer state school of agriculture in the United States, and was established as the result of ten years of agitation and discussion through the press, before state and county agricultural societies, in the constitutional convention of 1850, and before several subsequent sessions of the state legislature.

Today every state and territory has its college of agriculture and mechanic arts, either as a department of the state university, or as in Michigan, a separate institution. The body of this instruction as represented by these institutions, now comprises a distinguished and most notable part of higher education in the United States and

especially in the central and western states. Governor Warner in his address of welcome, well said, "The Michigan Agricultural college has been the pioneer and blazed the way and set the pace for all similar enterprises that since have been established."

A Pioneer Example.

The unexampled success of this semi-centennial celebration was due in a large measure to the grateful recognition of this pioneer example, not alone by the institutions of like character later established in the other states, but by the college fraternities in the country and especially by the officers of the National Bureau of Agriculture, the National Commission of Education and the President of the United States.

A most interesting and long to be remembered morning session was given over to the presentation of congratulatory addresses and communications. These came from Harvard, Cornell, Ohio, Wisconsin and Berkley; from Maine, Georgia and Louisiana; from Toronto and from Cambridge, England, and from three notable seats of learning on the continent. These congratulatory addresses were personally presented by the president or

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some distinguished member of the faculty of the institution in question; eight from New England; fourteen from the Middle and Central West; eight from the South; six from the far West; and in addition ten smaller denominational colleges and several woman's colleges were in a like manner represented.

The alumni registration reached nearly or quite two thousand; forty-five classes were represented in numbers from three to fifty each. The banquet held under an immense circus tent had the appearance of a national convention with banners designating the gathering places of the respective classes.

The returning alumni represented nearly every state in the Union and nearly every occupation in life, with a large representation in the corps of instructors in most every institution of like character. Even Japan has an agricultural college, the president of which, a Japanese, was graduated from the Michigan college.

President Roosevelt gave the commencement address entitled, "**The Man Who Works With His Hands,**" before an audience of more than 20,000 people, gathered upon a velvet lawn amphitheater; at the close of his address he presented to ninety-six young men and women the college diploma, an honor not before enjoyed by any college graduating class.

Ohio Lost Opportunity.

The primary foundation of all of the agricultural colleges (Michigan excepted), and nearly all the state universities west of the Allegheny mountains, rests upon the Morrill U. S. land grant act of 1862. Under the provisions of this act, Michigan received ten townships of public land, an acreage equal to the entire area of Lucas county. This land was located with good judgment and held for a ripe market, with the result that a perpetual endowment fund of one million dollars has been secured for the State College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts. (Ohio under the same act of congress received three and one-half times as much public

land as Michigan and disposed of the same so wastefully that the total price received was only one-half the sum secured by Michigan.)

The value of the lands, buildings and equipments of this institution now reach close to one million dollars. The annual income is now in excess of \$300,000—\$175,000 of which is derived from a 1-10 of a mill tax upon the grand duplicate of the state, and \$25,000 from the general government under the later Morrill act of 1890. **Michigan with her tax levy of $\frac{3}{8}$ mill for the University at Ann Arbor, 1-10 of a mill for the College of Agriculture and Mechanic Arts, together with her three Normal Schools, one of which has a national reputation, now leads all of the states of the Union in the promotion of higher education.**

Secretary Wilson stated in his address that the total number of institutions promoted by the Morrill act of 1862 and 1890 now reached the number of sixty-five, representing one for each state and territory with duplicates for colored students in the states of the south. According to the same authority these institutions have in permanent funds, lands, buildings and equipments amounting to \$84,000,000, and an annual revenue of \$14,500,000, to which the federal government contributes \$3,000,000 and the state governments \$7,500,000. The number of under-graduates in four year college courses now reaches 25,000, and the number of students in special courses, summer and winter sessions, is much greater. The attendance upon the farmer's institutes held throughout the country conducted by these institutions is estimated by Secretary Wilson at one million.

Hon. Joseph R. Williams.

The first president of the Michigan school of agriculture was Hon. Joseph R. Williams. He had been the leader of the agitation, resulting in its establishment and had mainly devised and promoted the ways and means through which it came into existence. He was a Harvard man, educated to the law, a vigorous writer and forcible speaker, active in public

affairs and was especially endowed for the work in hand. In his numerous addresses before state and county agricultural societies he presented with prophetic vision the work of the experiment stations in agriculture now so generously supported by the national government and of the schools of agriculture and mechanic arts, now so numerous in the United States. As early as 1849 he said:

"It is only in our time that agriculture has begun to assume the dignity of a science; it is only in our day that chemistry and physiology, geology and natural history have been studied by the farmer and applied to his pursuits. It is only recently that trained intellects have deemed the whole cultivation of the earth a field broad enough for their exercise. A new era is dawning upon the vision of the farmer; new light is illuminating his path and new visions, new pleasures are urging him on to improvement."

He was a member of the state constitutional convention of 1850 and prepared and supported in debate the section which directed the legislature to provide for such a school and authorized the appropriation of twenty-two sections of public lands for such purpose. At his instance and through the state legislature and other public bodies congress was repeatedly petitioned to appropriate public lands for this purpose. His wide acquaintance with public men and leaders in agriculture led to an extended correspondence invoking co-operation and petitions to the general government for this aid.

In his inaugural address at the opening of the school in May, 1857, and in his widely published address before the New York State Agricultural society at Rochester in October of the same year, his vigorous and ex-

haustive presentation of the claims upon the state and national government for the support of scientific instruction in aid of agriculture and the mechanic arts, led to the introduction of the Morrill bill in December of that year. This bill, under the able direction and support of Representative Morrill of Vermont, received in 1859 the approval of congress, but was defeated by the veto of Buchanan.

Unhappily, President Williams did not live to see the great fulfillment of the important measure to which he had given so much energy and ability. His death came one year before the final passage of the new Morrill bill in 1862.

President William was the grandfather of Joseph R. W. Cooper, John Kumler, Jr., and Langdon Kumler, well known young lawyers and business men of this city.

* * * * *

Among those who took part in these interesting exercises, in addition to local and state officials, may be mentioned Dr. Elmer E. Brown, U. S. Commissioner of Education; Hon. James Wilson, Secretary of the Department of Agriculture; President Wheeler, of the University of California; President James, of the University of Illinois; President Stone, of Purdue; President Angell, of Ann Arbor; Hon. W. A. Hays, Assistant Secretary of Agriculture; Hon. A. C. True, Director of U. S. Experiment Stations; President White, of University of Georgia; President Stimpson, of Agricultural College of Connecticut; Professors Bailey and Carpenter, of Cornell; Professor Daniels, of Wisconsin; Professor Cook, of Pomona College, California; President Butterfield, of Agricultural College of Massachusetts; President Edwards, of Rhode Island College; Dean Price, of Ohio State University; Professor Bessey, of the University of Nebraska. Six of the above names are found among the graduates of the Michigan Agricultural College.

An interesting feature was the supper given by President Monroe, of the Board of Trustees, to his old classmates of the years 1857 and 1858. Of these fifteen were present, many of whom had not met for more than forty years. They represented many

states and many occupations in life, from the successful farmer to the college professor, the engineer, the banker and lawyer.

Four perfect June days were given over to this semi-centennial celebration, which was more than a jubilee for the college itself. It was a milestone mark of the progress made in the last half century in scientific research and in the dissemination of knowledge relating to the arts and industries. It was perhaps the most distinguished gathering of experts, not alone in agricultural and horticultural science, but in other departments of learning, that has before taken place. To make science the hand-maiden of industry, to give the laboratory the place of the class room, and to reduce the learning of the schools to terms of everyday life, was the lesson of the hour. In the words of President Jones, of the State Normal College, it was the mission of this class of institutions to so combine the "simple life" with the "strenuous life" that the "efficient life" should be made possible.

An interesting illustration of the good will between the North and the South was in evidence when President Snyder, of the local college, upon the direction of his board of trustees, conferred upon President White, of the University of Georgia, the honorary degree of Doctor of Science. President Roosevelt arose and grasped President White warmly by the hand, and the young men shouted, "What is the matter with the South? The South is all right. Who's all right? The South." And this in full view of the State Capitol wherein were passed fifty years ago the most drastic anti-slavery laws and the most vigorous measures for the preservation of the Union. Honorary degrees were conferred upon Secretary Wilson, of the Bureau of Agriculture; President Angell, of Ann Arbor, and upon a number of men distinguished in learning and public service.

United States Morrill Act, 1862.

The Morrill bill was introduced into the National House of Representatives in December, 1857, and in 1859 received the approval of both houses

of congress, but was promptly vetoed by President Buchanan. Representative Morrill again introduced his measure in the house in 1861. Senator Wade introduced a like bill in the senate early in 1862. The measure passed and promptly received the signature of President Lincoln. **Next to the abolition of slavery, this college land grant act is held by many as the most important and far reaching measure of his administration.**

The Michigan School of Agriculture, for so it was modestly designated in the state constitution and in the early legislation, rested at its start upon the proceeds of the sale of twenty sections of what was known as salt spring lands under the legislation of 1855 and in obedience to the authority and direction of the constitution of 1850. In 1853 the legislature petitioned congress for an appropriation of public lands for a school of agriculture, but the request was not granted. Again in 1858 the state board of education, conjointly with the faculty of the school, made a like petition to congress for the same purpose and sanctioned by the legislature.

It is not too much to say that the constant pressure brought to bear by Michigan upon congress, led to the introduction of the Morrill bill in December, 1857, and its approval in 1859 (promptly vetoed by President Buchanan). This pressure upon congress was made more effective by an appeal to leading men in agriculture and broad minded statesmen throughout the country to sustain so important a measure. What was at first a local experiment and a state measure evolved into a national policy approved, as stated above, in 1862 by both houses of congress and by the president of the United States.

The Civil War and the grave public questions which followed, delayed action under this law in many states for several years; but later the whole country awoke to the importance of the measure, and the several states have vied with each other in liberal tax levies to supplement the national endowment.

A. E. MACOMBER.

Toledo, July 30, 1907.

The University of Michigan Once Owned One-Half of Toledo.

Interesting Review of Ann Arbor's Early History—The University Celebrates Sixty-Third Commencement Anniversary and is One of America's Five Best Institutions of Learning.

(From Toledo Evening Press, July 1, 1907.)

Editor Evening Press:

A journey across the state of Michigan in these bright summer days gives emphasis to the words on the great seal of the state, which are, "If you would see a beautiful peninsula look around you." A visit to Ann Arbor during the recent enjoyable commencement week suggests as the fitting motto for that charming city the modified words of the great seal: "If you would see a great university look around you."

This was the sixty-third commencement anniversary of the University of Michigan. This year the graduating students numbered 837. **But one university in the country has a larger attendance. Three have larger endowment funds, but it is confidently believed that no one is doing more efficient work.** The collegiate and professional departments are all exceptionally strong.

The Michigan university was placed by the Mosely educational commission among the five leading institutions of learning in our country, the others being Harvard, Cornell, Wisconsin and California.

In addition to the generous support which the state has heretofore awarded the university, the legislature, the day before its adjournment last week, increased the tax levy for the university fifty per cent. Next year the revenues from all sources will be in-round

sums one million dollars. Approximately one-third of this sum will be derived from tuition fees and laboratory charges. The remainder is derived from the state tax levy and from the endowment fund arising from the sale of the two townships of public lands, granted by the general government.

Local Interest in U. of M.

The University of Michigan has a local and romantic interest in her neighboring city of Toledo.. First, because Toledo is the second city in population within her more immediate sphere of influence, and second, because the university was at one time the owner of about one-half of the area of the city of Toledo, and including the central and business sections.

Of the two townships of public lands granted by congress to the university, nine hundred and sixteen acres were located in the Maumee valley, and where is now the city of Toledo. These lands were situated between the following boundary lines: beginning at the foot of Cherry street on the Maumee river, thence in a direct line to the intersection of Seventeenth and Washington streets, thence in a continuing direct line along the center of Dorr street to City Park avenue, thence on City Park avenue to Nebraska avenue,

thence on Nebraska avenue and Nebraska avenue projected, in a direct line to the Maumee river, thence on the river to the foot of Cherry street. Also all of the area between South street, the line of Junction avenue prolonged and the Maumee river; also the area between the line of Junction avenue prolonged, South street, Langdon street and Langdon street extended and the Michigan Southern railroad tracks.

Such was the laxity of management and want of foresight that this area of 916 acres was disposed of for a total and final sum not exceeding \$20,000, or an average of less than \$20 an acre.

The university historian dwells upon this disposition of this great property ever with astonishment and regret.

Rev. John D. Pierce.

At each anniversary a deeper appreciation is in evidence of the great services rendered the state and the university by John D. Pierce, the first state superintendent of public education in Michigan. It was at his suggestion and advice that legislation was secured making the state the trustee of the sixteenth section in each township set apart for the promotion of the common schools. This endowment fund held by the state for the promotion of the common school system of education now exceeds \$5,000,000.

It was during Superintendent Pierce's administration that the university was organized for active work, and the policy then adopted was largely outlined by him. In a contribution by Superintendent Pierce to the State Historical Association is found the following deeply significant statement:

"In the summer of 1837, I addressed a circular letter to a number of gen-

tlemen in the world of letters proposing the question; Shall we in the commencement of our career as a state grant to an indefinite number of private associations the right of conferring degrees, or for the present concentrate our energies in one university?

"I received answers from such men as Dr. Wayland, president of Brown university; President Humphrey, of Amherst college; President Day, of Yale; Governor Everett, of Massachusetts; President McGuffey and Bishop McIlvaine, of Ohio, all deploring the multiplication of institutions under the imposing name of universities and colleges, as unfavorable to sound learning and advising if possible the plan of concentrating our energies upon one university.

"President McGuffey made this striking and explicit declaration. 'All that can be said of the universities and colleges of the south and west is that they are well endowed academies, though some of them are not even that.'

Fake Universities Detrimental.

"Bishop McIlvaine, of Ohio, wrote under date of July 26, 1837: 'I consider the multiplication of institutions called colleges and empowered to confer degrees exceedingly detrimental to the interests of general education. They divide patronage and create competition, and instead of elevating the standard of education produce precisely the opposite. . . The temptation is to lower the terms of admission, retain the name, but lower the amount of studies, relax the discipline, confer degrees upon persons not fit to be sophomores, and so make the honor of graduation a miserable weed instead of a classic laurel.'

In conformity to these wise consid-

erations has the university developed. The department of engineering is the more recent acquisition. By liberal expenditure for buildings, machinery and teaching force, the department has become the leading engineering school in the middle west.

Medical Department.

The department of medicine and surgery has kept pace with the great discoveries of more recent years. The new building for this department represents an outlay of \$300,000, and the annual expenditure in this department over and above receipts from tuition fees and laboratory charges is in excess of \$55,000.

President Angell, in his recent report to the university board of regents, says: "Notwithstanding the general decline in attendance in medical schools, our department of medicine and surgery substantially held its ground this year. **The increasing demand which state legislatures and state medical boards are making on students for admission to practice are hastening the extinction of the weaker schools.** After a good proportion of these have been eliminated the stronger schools will probably regain their

former number. In no department of education has greater progress been made in the last few years than in medicine. But if the best standard of instruction is maintained, perhaps no department of education, except engineering, is so costly. And it is quite impossible for the old fashioned "country schools" as they were called, to meet the necessary expense and to provide the long course of instruction now required. Medical education is therefore likely to be concentrated in the larger and thoroughly equipped schools.

"In view of the foregoing consideration, the medical department will hereafter require for admission, at least two years of collegiate work."

As indicative of the standard of high school work in Michigan, it may be stated that Ann Arbor, a city of less than 20,000 inhabitants, has built and equipped a new high school building, with scientific laboratories, departments of domestic economy, library, etc., at a cost of \$275,000, exclusive of the land, which comprises a city square.

Toledo, June 30, 1907.

A. E. MACOMBER.

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